(d) what steps will be taken to help the farmers affected by failing monsoon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir. The India Meteorological Department have forecast a normal South-West Monsoon for the year 1997. Quantitatively, the rainfall for the country as a whole for the entire monsoon season (June to September), is forecst to be 92% of its long period average value within the model forecast error limit of ±4.

(b) As per the latest available information from the India Meteorological Department, there has been normal to excess rainfall in 26 meteorological sub-divisions comprising 64% of the districts in the country during the period 1.6.97 to 16.7.97. So far, the country has received 96% of the normal rainfall. However, in the remaining 9 meteorological sub-divisions covering Jammu & Kashmir, East Madhya Pradesh, West Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha & Marathawada, Orissa Costal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Andman & Nicobar Islands have received deficient rainfall.

(c) It is too early to assess the effect of deficient rainfall on the growth of crops in the areas mentioned above.

(d) the State Governments have already been advised to formulate detailed countingency plans for helping the farmers.

Starvation Deaths in Orissa

329. SHRI SANATAN BISI:
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any report from National Human Rights Commission on the starvation deaths in the K.B.K. district of Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) No formal report has been received from the National Human Rights Commission except the report of the official Team deputed by the Commission to investigate the reported starvation deaths in some areas of Orissa, seeking Government's comments.

Elnino Effect over the Pacific

330. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news in section of the press recently that something known as the Elnino effect has occurred over the Pacific and average temperature of the Pacific has risen by IOC due to which monsoon will fail on central India and there will be drought;

(b) what is Government's reaction to this; and

(c) what steps are being taken to help the farmers who will suffer due to scarcity of rains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The unfaourable trend of El-nino over the period March-May, 1997 has been taken into account by India Meteorological Department while formulation its Long Range Forecast for the 1997 monsoon rainfall, based on its 16-Parameter Power Regression Model. As per this Year's forecast, the rainfall for the country as a whole for the period June-September is likely to be about 92% of the long period average with an error limit of ±4% which is considered normal.